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in one of its directions terminated in deism, and in another formed the most profound and suggestive trend of English theology, culminating in Coleridge and his followers. For the philosophical student they represent the medium through which the influence of Plato, the neo-Platonists, and, to a lesser degree, the Stoics passed over into English thought. The conception of a law of nature, of the light of reason, as developed theologically by these men, and, along more distinctly ethical and metaphysical lines, by Cumberland, Cudworth, and Locke, marked a great phase in the emancipation of English thought from dead tradition or from slavery to any written documents, and at the same time it emphasized the profounder spiritual content of life and mind as opposed to many of the more superficial currents of the age.

Of the three writers, Culverwel is more philosophical, and Whichcote is more immediately concerned with the religious bearings of his principles, while Smith is more closely in touch with the neo-Platonist metaphysics.

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ETHICS, DESCRIPTIVE AND EXPLANATORY. By S. E. MEZES. New York: Macmillan, 1901. Pp. xxi+435. \$2.60, *net*.

THE author of this book has, it seems to me, the right conception of the problem of ethics and of the method to be followed in solving the same. His view is that ethics is a natural science; that as a science it must study the facts of morality and the evolution of morality. He attempts to "construct a positive or purely scientific theory of ethics, and to give a naturalistic account of all the aspects of morality and immorality." The question for the science of ethics to answer is: What is morality? The metaphysical question, What is the cosmic significance of morality? is interesting and important, and worthy of consideration, but before an answer can even be attempted the facts must be established. The cosmic bearings of the subject are not prejudged by this attitude, however; their consideration is merely postponed. In other words, ethics must study its facts as other sciences study theirs; it must analyze and describe, and then explain, or discover the principle or principles upon which moral phenomena are based. The metaphysics of ethics is the crown of the edifice.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I deals with subjective morality and the individual conscience, and discusses the following

topics: "Subjective Morality," "Voluntary Action," "The Adult Conscience," "The Psychic Cause of Conscience," "Birth and Growth of Conscience in the Child," "Birth and Growth of Conscience in the Race." Part II is devoted to objective morality, and takes up the following subjects: "The Constituents and Criteria of Objective Morality," "Courage," "Temperance," "Benevolence," "Justice," "Wisdom," "Welfare." In a concluding chapter the nature and value of morality are considered.

The general conclusions reached by the author appeal to one as much as his conception of the subject. His standpoint with respect to the problems of conscience and the ultimate end of moral action agrees materially with the views which are becoming more and more prominent among modern thinkers; with the views, for example, of men like Wundt and Paulsen. The only fault I have to find with the work is that it often lacks clearness and definiteness; it has a tendency to become vague, obscure, and diffuse. This is particularly true of the first part on conscience, which contains a mass of interesting and valuable material in a more or less chaotic state. The same remarks apply with equal force to the chapter on justice. It is also to be deplored that so few bibliographical references are given in a book that aims to do service as a text-book.

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THE PASSING AND THE PERMANENT IN RELIGION. By MINOT JUDSON SAVAGE. New York: Putnam, 1901. Pp. vii+336. \$1.50.

THE author holds that "religion is one of the central and eternal things in life . . . reaching back to the very beginning of the human race . . . one of the instincts of humanity . . . ineradicable," and hence permanent. As it is a relation between man and some higher being or beings, all who think must have their conceptions of this relation, and so must have a theology. As worship is man's expression of his feelings toward this superior being or beings, men will always worship. Man's feeling of dependence on some power above himself prompts him to seek help from or communion with that power; hence men will always pray. Man, being a social being, will desire to associate others with himself in acts of worship and prayer; hence organizations for united worship and other religious acts will always exist, such as churches. The universal belief in at least